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demand appears and reappears, explaining all industrial phenomena and settling all difficulties.

Mr. McPherson's venture into the field of abstract economics is rather disappointing. He merely scratches the soil. The most satisfactory parts of the work are those in which the author, casting aside the garb of an economic philosopher, considers the practical aspects of modern business. There one finds well presented many interesting and valuable data.

SIMON LITMAN.

TUFTS, J. H. *The real business of living.* (New York: Holt. 1918. Pp. vii, 476.)

PEDDIE, J. T. *A national system of economics with a consideration of the Paris economic resolutions and of their influence on nationality.* (New York: Dutton. 1918. Pp. 299. \$2.50.)

Social control. Papers and proceedings of the twelfth annual meeting of the American Sociological Society, held at Philadelphia, Pa., December 27-29, 1917. (Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press. 1918. Pp. vi, 269.)

Economic History and Geography

The Political History of the Public Lands from 1840 to 1862. From Pre-Emption to Homestead. By GEORGE M. STEPHENSON. (Boston: Richard G. Badger. 1917. Pp. 296. \$2.50.)

This is one of the admirable studies in the history of the public lands for which Turner and Farrand are primarily responsible. Earliest in point of time comes Ford's *Colonial Precedents of our National Land System as it Existed in 1800*. Next is Treat's *National Land System, 1785-1820*. Wellington's *Political and Sectional Influence of the Public Lands, 1828-1840* and this monograph carry the narrative down through the passage of the homestead act, while from the notes we learn that there is in manuscript White's *Administration of the General Land Office, 1812-1911*. With one or two more links forged the preparation will be complete for a fresh study of the system as a whole, which is much needed. It is not to our credit that Sato's paper, written a generation ago, remains our most satisfactory comprehensive guide.

Turner's conviction that there is no more important influence upon American development than the public lands is so well sustained by the facts that it is embarrassing to have to determine whether a monograph upon a single episode ought to deal more with economics, sociology, or politics. Professor Stephenson votes in favor of the last for himself, with the result that in more than half of his book he is telling the discouraging story of something that never happened. Like the future historian of free silver, he

is reproducing passionate politics that wrecked politicians rather than made them. Distribution, which was a vital issue for twenty years after the election of Van Buren, never produced measurable results, and was at best only a device to win votes. Whigs, who supported it in the hope that it might empty the treasury and advance their chances to get a high protective tariff, used it to dazzle frontier eyes, not to solve the social economic problem of the frontier region. The South, that fought it, disliked it less than the great political reactions it might produce; and Calhoun, its great enemy, was ready to go beyond distribution and give the lands themselves to the states in which they lay. Even the West, that shouted for distribution, knew that distribution would not meet its problems and continued at the same time to push for homesteads.

Professor Stephenson has worked out, with endless pains and great accuracy, the shifting currents of political feeling that flowed around the issue of distribution. Much of the result is negative because there is no other possible result for a political study of the lands in these years. He makes it entirely clear why Henry Clay had no right to be president.

The value of the book, and the learning and insight of the writer, increase the regret that the scheme omitted the economic and social phases of the lands. These were the years of manifest destiny. From the Detroit River to the Nueces the zone of the frontier swept in a great increasing crescent. The experiences of its rural conquerors made the first fundamental impression upon the Middle West we know today. The story of this social conquest has positive conclusions but is still untold; and we can only hope that when its teller comes he may do his work as adequately as has Professor Stephenson.

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The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution, 1763-1776.

By ARTHUR MEIER SCHLESINGER. Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, Vol. LXXVIII; Whole No. 182. (New York: Longmans Green and Company. 1918. Pp. 647. \$4.00.)

That economic causes played a large part in bringing about the American Revolution has been understood from the time John Adams wrote that molasses was an essential ingredient in Amer-